

2006 Local Accomplishments

AID FOR TOWNS IN THE 22ND SENATE DISTRICT

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 22nd state Senate District is ensuring Bridgeport, Monroe and Trumbull receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

Total Education Grants	\$161,094,501	This funding is an increase of \$6,328,366 over last year's total
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$1,149,604	
Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Grants	\$9,924,740	
Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP)	\$2,723,134	
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$13,902,625	
Extra Property Tax Relief for 2006	\$4,369,903	
Totals	\$193,164,507	

A Boost for the Arena at Harbor Yard

I am proud to announce that legislation has passed that will help make the Arena at Harbor Yard a more attractive venue for events. After November 1, 2006, tickets to the Arena will no



longer be subject to the 10% state admissions tax. The Arena at Harbor Yard is home to the Sound Tigers and has hosted other acts that appeal to residents young and old. With passage of this new law, the Arena becomes a more competitive venue and is more affordable to patrons.

I wanted to share with you an excerpt of an editorial published in the **Connecticut Post** on January 4, 2006 that outlines an issue that is important to me and many residents of our state.

SEEKING REFORMS IN ADOPTION LAWS

In an effort to better provide for adoption of children under state care, a special legislative task force is considering reforms to state laws that would offer more support for foster parents.

The initiative is bound to touch off an emotional battle with supporters of the biological parents of the children, but it would provide a step in the right direction in providing for more adoptions in the state.

The initiative, spearheaded by state Sens. Bill Finch, D-Bridgeport, and Ed Meyer, D-Guilford, seeks to extend more adoption rights to foster parents who have had a foster child in their care for a significant number of years.

The state now places much greater emphasis on reuniting children with their biological parents. However, in recent years there have been several high profile cases that have illustrated that the children might have been better off being adopted by foster parents than being reunited with parents who abused them in the first place.

It's an extremely difficult and complex issue, but the thinking of Finch, who is an adopted child, and Meyer is well intentioned and forward thinking.



A Message to My Constituents



Dear Neighbors,

On May 3rd, the 2006 legislative session came to a close. This was the shortest possible session—only 85 days. But despite this short time, the General Assembly passed significant initiatives which I have summarized in this newsletter.

I am especially proud that a bipartisan budget was adopted that provides tax relief for automobiles, homes and businesses. We increased money to cities and towns to help hold down local property taxes and increased—from \$400 to \$500—the state property tax credit. We also finally eliminated the illogical property tax on manufacturing machinery and equipment which I have proposed since first elected.

Please stay in touch and let me know if you'd like more information by filling out the form below.

Sincerely,

Bill Finch
Bill Finch
State Senator, 22nd District

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting your district, please visit my Web site:
www.senatedems.ct.gov/Finch.html



TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION on any of the following issues, fill out this form and mail it to me, e-mail or call my office. Make sure to give your name and mailing address and indicate which issues you're interested in. My contact information is on the mailing address panel.

- ☐ Seniors
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Car Insurance
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Property Taxes
- ☐ Adoption & Foster Care
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Global Warming & Clean Cars

Name:

Address:

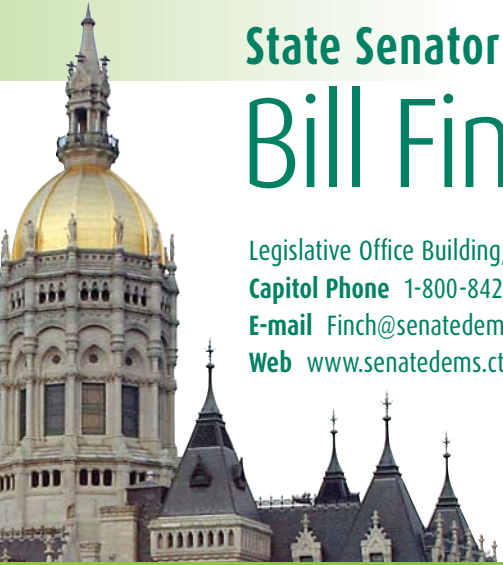
Town:

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I'm proud to represent the 22nd state Senate District which includes the communities of Bridgeport, Monroe and Trumbull

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CONNECTICUT JOBS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

2006 Legislative Initiatives

Did you know that since 1991, Connecticut has experienced no net job growth? Given that fact, my Senate Democratic colleagues and I initiated a comprehensive plan to grow Connecticut's economy. Our legislative package (Public Act 6-83) invests in education, jobs, university/business partnerships, transportation improvements, and fuel cell technologies that have been developed right here in Connecticut.

Highlights of our successful initiative include:

- Elimination of the property tax on manufacturing machinery and equipment
- Tax incentives to attract film producers to make movies in Connecticut
- Expanding our fuel cell industry
- Creating a Center for Entrepreneurship to assist new technology
- Establishing more funding for worker training
- Development Research and Economic Assistance (DREAM) Grants to help small businesses access federal aid
- A new Business Advocate's Office to serve as a one-stop shop to cut red tape for businesses
- Keeping more of our doctoral and research graduates in Connecticut with a "Scholar-to-Work" program

Understanding that a solid transportation infrastructure is critical to job creation, the General Assembly did not stop with last year's \$1.3 billion in transportation funding that will buy new rail cars for Metro North and make major improvements to I-95. During the 2006 session the legislature authorized another \$1 billion in projects that will help build the transportation future of our entire state. In addition to creating new mass transit options in the New Haven to Springfield corridor and in southeastern Connecticut, this bill authorizes:

Roadmap to Connecticut's Economic Future



- The accelerated purchase of Metro North rail cars so that these rail cars can be purchased as fast as the supplier can build them
- The authorization of the use of state dollars to encourage transit-oriented development and locating of businesses near mass transit
- \$45 million in new investments on the Branch Lines including improved service on the Danbury Line



STATE SENATOR BILL FINCH 22ND DISTRICT



Above left: Speaking with Flip Bodine, president of Bodine Manufacturing in Bridgeport during my forum on jobs and the economy that he hosted on the floor of his plant. Above: I had the honor to meet and congratulate UConn women Huskies Mel Thomas (left) and Nicole Wolff (right) at the Capitol for another outstanding season.

Working for Connecticut's Future

Clean Cars

The increased concentration of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides, in our atmosphere has the potential to negatively affect our climate. Since our vehicles emit these harmful gases, we passed legislation establishing a labeling program for new cars sold or leased for model years 2009 or later. The label will include a "greenhouse gas score" to help educate consumers on which vehicles are more environmentally sound and which have less detrimental impact.



Fighting to Control Gas Prices

The Senate adopted what would have been a "first-in-the-nation" ban on gasoline zone pricing. The proposal prohibited gasoline refiners and producers from establishing price zones based on geography or other criteria. The legislation also allowed gasoline retailers to provide cash discounts to their customers, and required retailers to set prices based on the cost of gasoline in their possession and not on anticipated spikes in the market. Unfortunately, this bill did not become law.

Tax Credits for Historic Structures

Our state has many older, historic structures that are now vacant and in desperate need of rehabilitation. We passed legislation that authorizes \$15 million per year in business tax credits for funds spent rehabilitating these properties for residential use. This type

of incentive will help restore and beautify these buildings while providing housing and reinvestment to our communities.



Energy Efficiency

To help residents with energy costs, we passed legislation last October that exempted certain weatherization products—such as insulation, programmable thermostats, and energy-efficient furnaces and boilers—from the state sales tax. This session, we extended the exemption until June 30, 2007. We also passed legislation that requires certain state construction projects to meet stricter energy and environmental standards. This will help save state taxpayers money while promoting energy efficiency.

Birth Certificates for Adoptees

Adoption can provide children with enormous opportunities. But, historically, many adopted children have grown up without knowing who they really are. That's why the legislature passed a law designed to provide a greater sense of identity to adoptees by providing access to their original birth certificates when they turn 21. Unfortunately, this important bill was vetoed by the governor and will not become law.

Taking a Stand Against Underage Drinking

House parties pose a significant risk to our young people who consume alcohol on private property. The General Assembly passed a new law this session that makes it a crime to knowingly allow underage

drinking on private property or to do nothing to prevent such activity. This legislation also extends the law prohibiting the possession of alcohol by a minor on public property to all private property as well.

Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools

We listened to Connecticut's nutritionists, physicians and parents and fought to provide our students with healthier food and beverage choices. Senate Democrats led passage of landmark legislation that bans the sale of soda and other sugary drinks in schools. It also provides towns three times as much in school lunch aid from the state if they provide healthier food choices for their students. This incentive will promote the better nutrition and healthier lifestyles our kids deserve.



Connecticut's Farms

Trumpeting our Connecticut-grown farm products is excellent publicity for our state. We passed legislation that requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a campaign, including television and radio advertisements, to promote the advantages of purchasing these products. In addition, we expanded the types of products that can be sold at farmers' markets. We also provided funding to UConn to expand its Integrated Pest Management program, which promotes pest control through safe and effective methods and is crucial for crop productivity and quality.



With the help of an increasing budget surplus, we were able to make many improvements to our existing FY '07 budget. And importantly, we were able to pass this budget on time and with bipartisan support. We wisely used state resources to make significant investments in programs beneficial to the health, safety and education of Connecticut's residents. In addition, we are funding a cutting edge economic development program designed to create the kind of jobs needed to keep Connecticut vital and competitive in the 21st century.

- Increased vital aid to cities and towns by \$60 million—an action necessary to help keep local property taxes down
- Deposited approximately \$350 million in the Rainy Day Fund
- Fully funded the state Teachers' Retirement Fund in both FY '06 and FY '07 with \$246 million
- Fought back efforts to repeal the current property tax credit on the state income tax
- Successfully fought to increase the car and property tax credit from \$400 to \$500